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# Major News Releases and Speeches

August 14-August 21, 1981

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# Speeches

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U.S. Department of Agriculture • Office of Governmental and Public Affairs

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**Remarks prepared for delivery by Secretary of Agriculture John R. Block before the National Association of County Agricultural Agents, Ithaca, New York, August 17, 1981**

Just a few weeks ago, a small beady-eyed insect buzzed through thousands of television and radio airwaves, and lit on the front pages of newspapers throughout the world. Until that time, the public hadn't known much about the Mediterranean Fruit Fly. Most people probably didn't even know that such a menace existed.

There was something else that many people didn't know about. They didn't realize how important California agriculture is to this nation. Nor did they realize that our fruit and vegetable business is a multi-billion-dollar industry that affects millions of people around the world. It took a potential disaster to turn the eyes of the nation toward this important part of agriculture.

Another situation took place about a year and a half prior to that. The government imposed a partial embargo on grain to the Soviet Union. The results were devastating. Once again, it took a disaster to focus attention on the growing importance of American agriculture.

This nation and the world are just beginning to realize what you and I have known all along, that we happen to be working in an extremely important industry. A lot of people have worked hard over the years to make agriculture what it is today. And you—as county agents—have played a major role in that overall effort. The work you do may not bring the headlines, but that does not alter the fact that you have helped make agriculture important. And that makes you important.

But, you must realize that the role you play in this industry will be only as important as you choose to make it. Acting as the educational and advisory arm of the USDA, you are the key people helping our producers run their operations efficiently, productively and profitably.

No doubt, you are very aware of the concerns and problems facing farmers and ranchers as we move through the 1980's. You know many of these producers and their families—many on a first name basis. They have developed a trust in your skills, and a faith in your judgments.

And that's why you should keep one important thought in mind as you carry out your work.

Simply stated—there is no such thing as a problem without a solution.

That's the nature of agriculture, and that's the nature of the people who produce for agriculture. One solid reason why we have achieved so well is because producers have consistently been able to turn their problems into opportunities.

One such opportunity for all of us involves helping younger people get a good footing in agriculture. We are all aware of the difficulties that these future farmers and ranchers face—the availability of farmland, the costs of modern equipment, not to mention the higher interest rates that affect every one.

Here we have a tremendous opportunity to help develop the people who will be producing for tomorrow. The Department of Agriculture is taking advantage of that opportunity. We are developing a pilot program designed to assist many young people get into the business. In the spirit of this administration, our program will be a coordinated effort involving the private sector and agencies of this department—and I am very happy to call Extension one of our agencies, once again.

Farmers Home will be a major help in providing credit to new farmers. But loans are only part of the total effort. Another key factor is encouraging the right applicants into the program—young people who display both the desire and the fortitude to be successful. Thirdly, with your help, we will help each new producer work out a detailed plan. This will include personal counseling and loan servicing.

We are also calling upon local individuals and groups for help. We hope that the local financial community will be interested in working with us to help these young people become successful business men and women.

What I am talking about is not a new program. Rather, it is a new emphasis. With a closely supervised plan and a close coordination between USDA and the private sector, we are very confident that a new producer can be graduated from Farmers Home to private credit within five to ten years.

There are two other topics I want to touch upon. They involve areas

in which each of you can provide an extremely valuable service to the people that you serve.

The first involves our federal crop insurance. I would strongly urge each of you to use whatever means available to encourage your producers to take advantage of this opportunity.

This is especially important for wheat and barley producers, since the deadline for applying for insurance is as early as Aug. 31 in most growing areas. You must make it clear that federal disaster payments very likely could not be available next year. Legislation that is currently working its way through Congress would allow disaster payments only in those counties where our federal crop insurance is not available.

I think my point is clear. Every year, one out of 14 planted acres in this country never makes it to harvest. Farmers cannot assume that kind of risk without some protection. I don't want anybody to be disappointed next spring when they find out they are not eligible for disaster payments. It is up to each of you to get this point across.

The second area I want to cover involves the President's tax package. Not only does this provide relief on personal income and estate taxes, but it also contains a capital cost recovery system that can be of great benefit to many operations. I want each of you to encourage the producers in your counties to study the new tax package, and learn how they can use it to their advantage.

This is extremely important, not only for agriculture, but for the President's entire Economic Recovery Plan. The only way the plan will work is for the private sector to take advantage of the opportunities that are offered. And since agriculture accounts for a full 20 percent of our Gross National Product, it becomes very important that agriculture understands the President's plan.

You are in one of the best positions to carry this information to the country. All of you have direct contact with producers. Many of you have newspaper columns and local radio spots. I want to encourage you to use all of these means to talk to your producers about the opportunities that exist with crop insurance and the tax package.

The thing we all have to remember is that the United States has the greatest agriculture industry in the world. That didn't just happen by accident. I happen to think that the future holds promise of developing an even greater industry. But, that will not happen by accident either. It

will only happen if we continue to take advantage of today's opportunities. And, believe me, it has to be a team effort.

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# News Releases

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## **USDA REPORTS LITTLE MEAT FROM SUSPECT LOT REACHED CONSUMERS**

WASHINGTON, Aug. 14—A continuing U.S. Department of Agriculture investigation has revealed that a small amount of meat from a suspect shipment from Australia reached American consumers, a USDA official said today.

The Department of Agriculture, along with the Australian government, is investigating shipments of meat from an Australian meat plant. The meat was labeled "beef" but contained some horsemeat.

"The Food Safety and Inspection Service and USDA's Office of the Inspector General launched an intensive investigation after tests confirmed that three blocks of meat—removed from production July 27 by a USDA inspector—came from horses," said FSIS Administrator Donald L. Houston. The product was discovered at Foodmaker, Inc., San Diego, Calif., a subsidiary of Ralston Purina Co., St. Louis, Mo.

Houston said USDA—with the full cooperation of Ralston Purina—has determined that approximately 7,000 pounds of a 36,300-pound shipment of boneless beef from Australia were eaten by customers of the Jack-in-the-Box restaurant chain owned by Foodmaker. No one knows for sure whether any of the 7,000 pounds of meat from the suspect shipment contained horsemeat, he said.

Houston said the plant produces fresh frozen meat patties and cooked taco mix for use by Jack-in-the-Box restaurants. The restaurants receiving Foodmaker product are San Diego, Calif.; Houston and Dallas, Tex.; and Denver, Colo. Preliminary analyses of patties collected from Hayward, San Diego, Denver and Phoenix show the presence only of beef.

The meat shipment, which was used only in the July 24, 27 and 30 production at Foodmaker, has been traced to an Australian slaughter and boning facility, Profreeze, located in Richmond, Victoria.

According to Gardner Murray, Veterinary Attache at the Australian Embassy in Washington, "As soon as USDA relayed their suspicions to us, the Australian Department of Primary Industry took action to delist

the establishment from exporting meat to the United States until the full facts are known."

Murray said the Australian Bureau of Animal Health, the meat inspection branch of the Department, is currently investigating the incident along with the Australian Federal Police.

"In addition, the Bureau has increased inspection surveillance at the complex, where the plant is one of seven adjacent establishments," he said.

## **USDA PREDICTS REDUCTION IN SAO PAULO'S 1982 COFFEE PRODUCTION POTENTIAL**

WASHINGTON, Aug. 19—Mid-July frosts in the Brazilian state of Sao Paulo, which produces nearly a third of Brazil's coffee crop, will lower the probable coffee production in that state next year by about one-half, according to a field survey by the office of the U.S. agricultural counselor in Brasilia.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture estimates that frost on July 20 and 21 damaged as many as 50 to 60 percent of the 900 million coffee trees in Sao Paulo and could reduce next year's potential production to about 4 to 5 million 60-kilogram bags. This compares with a pre-frost production estimate of 8 to 9 million bags.

On Aug. 12, USDA officials said the July frosts were likely to reduce potential 1982 coffee production in the Brazilian state of Parana by two-thirds, from 8 to 9 million bags to about 3 million bags. A damage assessment in the largest producing state, Minas Gerais, and a summary of aggregate findings for Brazil are scheduled for release during the week of Aug. 24.

The Sao Paulo survey showed that 5 percent of the trees were killed and will need to be uprooted. Ten percent were severely damaged, with no production expected from the trees for four years. About 20 percent were moderately damaged and virtually no production will be forthcoming for three years. Twenty percent were lightly damaged and will require two years for full recovery.

For the recently harvested 1981-82 crop, Sao Paulo produced between 9.5 and 10.0 million bags, about 30 percent of Brazil's total production. This year's Brazilian crop currently is estimated at 32

million bags, or about a third of total world production, according to USDA.

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## **SCIENTISTS TO STUDY EFFECTS OF STRESS IN FARM ANIMAL CARE**

WASHINGTON, Aug. 19—Scientists will look for new ways to keep farm animals healthy, contented and highly productive to produce the nation's meat, milk and eggs in research funded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Terry B. Kinney, acting administrator of USDA's Agricultural Research Service, said today a \$380,000 research project will seek to discover whether stress is affecting the production of poultry, veal calves and swine under modern farming practices; and if so, how to deal with it.

"Both farmers and the public have an interest in sound animal management," Kinney said. "For the farmer, good animal management means better, more economical production and higher net returns. For the public, it means more plentiful and more economical food supplies."

Kinney said the new research will be conducted at the USDA agency's Roman L. Hruska Meat Animal Research Center in Clay Center, Neb., and at eight universities.

"We are looking for ways to determine whether stress exists under confinement conditions," he said. "If stress is found as a result of the experiments, then attempts will be made to alleviate the stress through housing and management procedures.

"Animals must receive adequate nutrition, proper housing and veterinary care and be properly selected genetically to be productive," Kinney continued.

"Ongoing scientific information about farm animal care is needed as agriculture adopts new practices. What we learn from the research will help farmers with their animal management."

Kinney, whose agency will coordinate the project, said the effects of stress on the behavior of farm animals can lead to weight loss,

reduction in growth rate and susceptibility to disease.

Institutions doing the research will be Cornell University, University of Georgia, University of Illinois, University of Minnesota, Texas A&M University, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Washington State University and University of Wisconsin.

Robert R. Oltjen, director of the Hruska U.S. Meat Animal Research Center, will coordinate the studies.

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## **USDA REVISES GRADE STANDARDS FOR GRAPEFRUIT JUICE**

WASHINGTON, Aug. 20—On Sept. 17, the U.S. Department of Agriculture will revise the grade standards for grapefruit juice so more flavorful juice from mature grapefruit can be used in higher grades of the product.

"The revised standards respond to the request of the citrus industry to be allowed to process more mature fruit to provide the best-tasting juice in the higher grades," said Mildred Thymian, administrator of USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service.

"The standards will permit more variance in the color of grapefruit juice, but will retain color as a quality factor. Juice from very mature fruit lacks the vivid color found in less mature fruit."

The Florida Citrus Processors Association first asked USDA to revise the grade standards in 1977.

Under the revised standards, dual grade names, which use both words and letters—such as U.S. Grade A or U.S. Fancy—will be eliminated in favor of single-letter grade names, such as U.S. Grade A, Thymian said.

"Moreover, the final rule combines the separate grapefruit juice standards—grapefruit juice, dehydrated grapefruit juice, concentrated grapefruit juice for manufacturing, frozen concentrated grapefruit juice—into one," Thymian said.

Notice of this action was published in the Aug. 18 Federal Register, available in local libraries.

USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service develops grade standards and provides official grading services for many food products. Use of the standards and services is voluntary and is paid for by the user.

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## **USDA CHANGES GRAIN INSPECTION EQUIPMENT TOLERANCES**

WASHINGTON, Aug. 20—The U.S. Department of Agriculture has changed some of the nomenclature, tolerances and methods of applying tolerances for official grain inspection equipment.

The action will bring the testing of inspection equipment—including balances, barley pearlers, sieves (perforation accuracy only), test weight apparatus and dividers—into agreement with current practices, according to Kenneth A. Gilles, administrator of USDA's Federal Grain Inspection Service.

The test equipment tolerances are described in regulations under the U.S. Grain Standards Act.

Comments on the changes, in duplicate, should be sent by Oct. 13 to the issuance and coordination staff, room 1127 Auditors Bldg., FGIS, USDA, Washington, D.C., 20250. Phone: (202) 447-3910.

The changes were adopted when they were published in the Federal Register Aug. 11 without public hearings because the current practices are not being altered, Gilles said.

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## **MEDFLY QUARANTINES EXTENDED IN CALIFORNIA AND FLORIDA**

WASHINGTON, Aug. 20—Federal Mediterranean fruit fly quarantines were extended today to part of Stanislaus County in the San Joaquin Valley, California's major commercial produce area, following last week's discovery of more than 50 Medflies and several properties containing larvae.



Also, part of Santa Cruz County, on the California coast, and a small area near Tampa, Fla., were placed under U.S. Department of Agriculture quarantine after entomologists found Medflies there.

"Last week's find was the first we've found in a major commercial production area," said Harvey L. Ford, deputy administrator of the USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service. "The San Joaquin Valley is separated from the other infested areas by mountains, and working with California's Department of Food and Agriculture, we had hoped to be able to keep the area free of flies."

Ford said the Medfly may have been spread by travelers carrying illegal fruit out of areas already regulated—all of Alameda, San Mateo and Santa Clara Counties.

The federal regulations, which parallel state rules, require many kinds of fruits, vegetables, nuts and ornamental plants to be fumigated or subjected to cold for specified periods to kill Medflies before allowing the fruit out of the area. State regulations govern movement within the state, while federal regulations govern movement out of the state.

The regulated area in Stanislaus County includes a 262 square-mile area in the western portion of the county. The regulated area in Santa Cruz County includes the northern part of the county as far south as state route 17, including the city of Santa Cruz.

A 4 square-mile area of Hillsborough County adjacent to the area already regulated near Tampa, Fla., has also been quarantined.

Because of the emergency situation, these actions became effective when published in the Federal Register. However, the public is invited to send comments, until Oct. 19, to the Regulatory Support Staff, Plant Protection and Quarantine, APHIS, USDA, Federal Building, Hyattsville, Md. 20782.

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## **COTTON GROWERS TO PAY USER FEE FOR CLASSING**

WASHINGTON, Aug. 20—Comments will be accepted until Sept. 10 on U.S. Department of Agriculture proposals to institute a users' fee

for classing of producers' cotton and increase prices for official USDA cotton standard forms and fees for other services.

USDA is proposing to make the new fees and increases effective Oct. 1.

Jesse F. Moore, cotton official with USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service, said the users' fee will be 60 cents per bale for the classing service. Previously, this service was provided free by USDA under provisions of the Smith-Doxey Act. The users' fee and the increased prices for standards are required under the recently enacted Omnibus Reconciliation Act of 1981, Moore said.

USDA cotton standard form price increases include:

- Prices for domestic shipments of physical grade standards for American Upland cotton would be \$150 for the 12-sample Universal Standards box and \$80 for a 6-sample guide box.

- A 6-sample grade standard for American Pima cotton would cost \$110.

- Staples standards for American Upland and American Pima cotton would be available for \$11 and \$12 per one-pound roll, respectively.

Moore said the increases in fees customarily charged for cotton classing services under the Cotton Standards Act, and for cotton futures certification and cottonseed grading supervision are needed because it now costs USDA more to provide these services. The last fee revision was in 1979, he said, and USDA needs about a 20 percent increase to defray the increased cost.

Changes in the fees for some of the most widely used services include:

- The fee for classing cotton under the Cotton Standards Act would be increased from 90 cents to \$1 per sample.

- The fee for rewriting classification memoranda would be increased from \$1.50 to \$1.80 per sheet.

- The fee for a combination classification for cotton futures would be increased from \$1.50 to \$2 per sample.

The proposals will be published in the Aug. 21 Federal Register. Comments should be sent to: Loyd Frazier, Cotton Division, 306 Annex, USDA, Washington, D.C., 20250. Phone: (202) 447-2147.

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## **U.S.-CHINA DELEGATES TO HOLD ANNUAL GRAIN AGREEMENT CONSULTATION**

WASHINGTON, Aug. 21—Representatives of the United States and China will meet here Sept. 2-3 for routine consultations on the second year of the U.S.-China long term grains supply agreement.

Richard Smith, administrator of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Foreign Agricultural Service, will head the U.S. delegation. The Chinese delegation will be led by Zhang Jianhua, general manager of Ceroilfood, an import/export organization that deals with the grain trade.

The September meeting is one of several provided for in the current four-year agreement. During the meeting, delegates will discuss the overall grain situation in the two countries, as well as review the operations of the grain agreement.

Under terms of the agreement, the Chinese each year are required to buy at least 6 million tons of wheat and corn, and may buy up to 9 million tons without further consultation. If they intend to purchase over 9 million tons, they have agreed to consult with the U.S. government on these additional purchases.

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